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## FIRST OIL WELL IN RITCHIE COUNTY

**H. P. McGINNIS GIVES SOME INTERESTING INFORMATION ON INTERESTING SUBJECT.**

West Virginia is one of the greatest oil producing States in the Union, and it is a significant fact that the first well ever drilled for oil was in West Virginia in 1825. When the well was drilled oil operators did not think of delving into the earth 1,500 and 1,600 feet, but expected oil at a depth of 50 or 60 feet.

H. P. McGinnis, writing from Ritchie county, gives the public the following interesting facts:

"Historical facts prove that the first well drilled for oil was sunk in what is now Ritchie county, in 1825. The location of the well was on the Lemon farm, about one mile above the junction of the north and south forks of the Hughes river. This well was drilled by a man named Lemon and a mulatto and the manner of sinking it was as practical as it was unique. A wheel was so fixed in the river that it afforded ample power to sink the well. This was perhaps the first time in the history of well boring that water power was so successfully used. Oil in this section was found at a depth from 26 feet and the oil was procured by stirring the water up with the oil and then skimming the oil off the top.

This well was situated on the banks of the river and they did not have to drill far through the loose soil until oil was found. Probably "cave-ins" were not known to these early prospectors, the pioneers in one of the world's greatest industries.

To many the statement that Ritchie county was the site of the first oil well may seem a bold assertion, but many historians claim that Col. Drake

sunk the first oil well in the year 1858 on Oil creek, in Pennsylvania. The fact is, Col. Drake did sink the first oil well ever drilled in Pennsylvania, and he was also the originator of the casing idea.

Other authorities state that the first well was sunk in Kentucky, near Burksville, in 1828. This was drilled for salt, and at a depth of 80 feet oil was found in large quantities. Wells were also put down in the Kanawha valley at an early date, but these also were drilled for salt water and the oil was not used for several years. Col. Drake's well was put down in 1858 and the Kentucky well in 1828, and the Kanawha salt wells were not sunk for oil purposes as was the one in the county of Ritchie.

For further proof the following is taken from J. R. Colgate's West Virginia Farm, Forest and Oil Wells, published in 1865:

As early as 1828 oil was procured in West Virginia by digging sand-pits to a depth of a dozen feet or more. It was procured on the Hughes river, about a mile from the junction of the north and south forks, on the north side. On the south side some 20 years ago wells were drilled from which petroleum flowed in small quantities for years.

In fact, one of them is yet flowing a small quantity of oil. (This was in 1875, at the time of the publication of the above named book.) This Hughes river oil was used mainly as a liniment for burns, cuts and bruises, for man and beast, and was especially valued for horses. A very small quantity was obtained in these sand diggings by simply stirring up the sand and allowing the oil to accumulate on the surface. In the year 1850-51 the yearly product reached nearly 75 barrels.

The above is quoted to show what the literary men of West Virginia thought of our oil industry in 1863.

The United States Geological Survey adds many other interesting facts to the above. These reports say that this Ritchie county oil was first used by the Indians for medicinal purposes, and later when the first settlers came they noticed the bubbling up of oil on the river and it was used by them. When Col. William Lowther and the

Hughes first discovered the river they noticed its curious formation, but little did they know that a century later this same fact should control the finances of the world and give life and activity to a nation, the grandest and richest of any in the world.

The world has had no record of the early discoverers of oil, simply because there were none to write up the history of their unceasing toil and activity. It is high time the historians give credit where credit is due and to no longer mislead future generations.

Ritchie is now one of the greatest counties of a great State and oil has played no little part in the formation and development of the county.

Let those who blazed the trail be known as pioneers and let those who followed in their footsteps be known as followers.

Today Ritchie county produces thousands of barrels of petroleum, and many times since then have the oil and gas flames lighted up the valley or cast a glowing reflection on the distant hills. The oil has proven a beacon light to many an industrious man. It has been the light that has led the world in the last quarter century.

### MEN AND WOMEN.

It is said that H. H. Rogers, the "brains" of Standard Oil, pays his private secretary \$20,000 a year.

Cornelius Vanderbilt has invited Clyde shipbuilders to tender bids for the construction of a new steam yacht of 1,000 tons.

Frank H. Hitchcock, who managed Secretary Taft's campaign, is a voluminous author. He wrote about 40 pamphlets on foreign trade when he was in the Department of Agriculture.

Bishop Scannell, of Omaha, and Archbishop Ireland, of St. Paul, will sail on Thursday for Rome to present their congratulations to the Pope on the fiftieth anniversary of his entering the priesthood.

William Barz, an American engineer, has been selected by Finance Minister Kokovoff to be president of the Nevsky Shipbuilding Company, of Russia. The company is controlled by the government and it gets a large share of the naval construction work.

Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's reply to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's paper on the suffrage question in America has been

published as a leaflet and copies are being bought by the thousands. The majority of the orders are from the various suffrage clubs of this country and England.

Dr. William H. Tolman, who returned last week from a five-month trip through Europe, where he had gone in the interest of the American Museum of Safety Devices, spent about a month in Rome, where he represented the United States at the eighth session of the International Congress of Social Insurances.

Secretary Root is the only Cabinet member who wears a silk hat down to work every day. Senator Milton, the new Senator from Florida, has a heavy black mustache and long black hair. He looks like a Spaniard, which he isn't. Senator Hemenway, of Indiana, once dug ditches in Boonville, the village he still lives in; and Senator Beveridge, from the same State, was a book agent, and a good one.

### PAPER FROM COTTON STALKS.

Can Be Made for \$15 a Ton, Says Bureau of Manufactures.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 26.—Paper is to be manufactured from cotton stalks, a heretofore useless by-product, according to a report of the Bureau of Manufactures. A company capitalized at \$500,000 has been organized at Atlanta, Ga., for the purpose. It is claimed that paper can be made from cotton stalks at a cost of about \$15 per ton.

### TAFT HOME AT AUGUSTA.

President-Elect Will Go to the Territorial Cottage There on Dec. 18.

HOT SPRINGS, Va., Nov. 26.—President-elect Taft has announced that he has taken the Territorial cottage at Augusta, Ga., for occupancy December 18. The cottage is adjacent to the Bon Air Hotel, where the Taft family will take their meals.

Mrs. Taft left here for New York, where she will be met by her three children. She expects to return here Saturday.

In this grave place the peeled chestnuts and let them simmer ten or fifteen minutes at the side of the stove. Serve as a vegetable.—The December Delineator.

### Scalloped Oysters.

Drain the oysters, arrange them in the bottom of a buttered pudding dish and grow over them fine bread crumbs. Sprinkle with pepper and salt and dot with bit soft butter. Wet with a little oyster liquor. On this put another layer of oysters, similarly seasoned, then more crumbs, more seasoning and so proceed in alternate layers until the dish is full. The last layer should be of crumbs, and the amount of butter on this must be twice as much as on the previous layers. Bake, covered, for half an hour.—The December Delineator.

### CUMMINS TO FILL ALLISON'S PLACE

Iowa's Governor Goes to United States Senate—Garst New Governor.

DES MOINES, Iowa, Nov. 26.—The Iowa legislature has elected Hon. A. B. Cummings United States Senator to fill out the unexpired term caused by the death of the late Senator Allison, which would have expired March 4, 1909, and named Hon. Warren Garst to fill out the unexpired gubernatorial term of Mr. Cummings, who would have completed seven years as Iowa's chief executive January 15, 1909.

Following the election of Governor Cummings to the senate by a vote of 109 to 35, Lieutenant Governor Garst at 3 o'clock was duly inaugurated and assumed the reins of the office. A reception at which thousands were present was held in the rotunda of the capitol building at 8 o'clock. Governor Garst and Senator Cummings stood in line for more than two hours receiving the congratulations of Iowans. Nearly all of Des Moines, it seemed, turned out to extend congratulations to the newly elected officials.

Chief Justice Ladd administered the oath of office to Governor Garst. Senator Cummings will go to Washington early next month to be officially sworn in.

### KAISER RIDICULED IN JAPAN.

TOKIO, Nov. 26.—The recent published interview with Emperor William is the most absorbing topic of the day here. Officials, as well as the newspapers, believe that the Emperor has been correctly quoted, but the newspapers ridicule his statements.

One paper publishes a picture of the German Emperor having his tongue

amputated, and editorially discredits the statement attributed to him that he and President Roosevelt have agreed to oppose Japan.

All the newspapers inspired by the opposition insist that the relations between America and Japan, especially regarding China, and also the open door, are exceptionally friendly, and that harmony is assured. They attribute the publication of the interview with Emperor William to a desire to embroil the United States in trouble with Europe, by creating strained relations.

### WINFIELD.

Mr. and Mrs. Norval McVicker and son Bernard, Mrs. William Hayhurst and three children and Mrs. Mattie Hayhurst and daughter-in-law, Mrs. Nellie Hayhurst, and son Gene were visiting at Zeb Heck's Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. B. William Davis and three sons, Victor, Arthur and Willie, were visiting the latter's brother, Monroe Kliner, at Fairmont Saturday and Sunday.

Misses Alice Cook, Ue Swisher and Gertrude McElfresh were calling on Miss Jessie Swisher Sunday night. Miss Leaty McHenry was calling on Misses Ruth and Esther Keltner Sunday.

There will be literary here every Friday night. Everybody is invited. Mr. Camden VanGilder went visiting at Luther Keener's Sunday.

Mrs. Eliza Miller is staying at Fairmont.

Miss Ada VanGilder was visiting at Luther Keener's one day last week.

Mr. Green and Miss Leaty McHenry were calling at Luther Keener's Thursday evening.

Mrs. Liza Siler is visiting her father, Mr. Lanham, in Preston county, this week.

Mrs. Annie Lesom was visiting her daughter, Mrs. James Phillips, at Fairmont Tuesday.

Mr. Zeb Heck was visiting Mr. Garfield Heck and other relatives near Grafton last week.

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RALPH BINGHAM, World's Champion Fun-Maker, January 4, 1909.

ORIOLE CONCERT CO., January 22, 1909.

OPIE REED, Famous Novelist, March 6, 1909.

DeWITT MILLER, Mt. Lake Park Favorite, March 18, 1909.

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